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THREE STEPS TOWARD A RED SOX REVIVAL {page 16}

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- Romney needs a game-changer in first debate tonight with Obama
- Forget policy — winners usually emit feeling and zingers {page 06}

MITT'S LAST STAND

the word

KStew betrayed People's sexiest?

- Hey, at least People giving Pattinson the honor should make him feel better {page 07}

news

Rejection again for voter ID laws

- Newest defeat comes in Pa. when judge postpones law until after election {page 04}

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Commuters can now shop at their stop

For the next 12 weeks, an Internet grocer will give commuters a leg up on time management.

Starting this week, Peapod.com will install 13 "digital shopping displays" at Commuter Rail station platforms that will let commuters with iPhones, iPads or Android phones scan a QR code on the billboards to download a free PeapodMobile app and start shopping on the spot by scanning bar codes of the products.

"The bottom line for us: It's very effective to bring to life our tagline, 'Shop anywhere, anytime.'"
MERZBACHER

"With schedules that are more demanding than ever, and people spending 200-plus hours a year in transit, our hope is that consumers will take advantage of our virtual stores and mobile app while they're on the go and enjoy the time saved," said Mike Brennan, Peapod's COO.

Some displays were installed yesterday, but may not all be in place until the end of the week, said Peg Merzbacher, Peapod's director of marketing. METRO/MR

PEAPOD.COM

▶ Groceries while you wait

In the news

11

The number of miles a dog traveled in the grille of a car. A driver spotted the white poodle-mix jump in front of his Toyota while driving in Taunton Sept. 20, according to the Taunton Daily Gazette. He stopped, didn't see the dog and continued into Rhode Island. It wasn't until a passing driver alerted him that he realized the dog was wedged in the grille. It was recovering in an animal hospital at press time. METRO

Today's local tweet

"#MBTA bus driver yells to whole bus: "I have no idea what happened,I should be having breakfast, they called me to rescue you, so here I am"

@STVBURNS, LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE HAD CAFFEINE WITHDRAWAL

In the news

▶ The suspect

Cops: Suspect in robbery had grenade

ROCKLAND. A Pembroke man was arrested yesterday and charged with robbing a Rockland convenience store using a hand grenade. Mark Whittles, 49, was arrested after police received a tip, according to the Patriot Ledger. Police said Whittles held up a Tedeschi Food Shop Friday night. They said a search of his home yesterday turned up a grenade. METRO

New Celtics Lottery ticket

MASSACHUSETTS. A day after launching sales of $10 tickets in its new Super 50/50 Raffle game, the Massachusetts Lottery yesterday announced another one — The 2012 Boston Celtics Instant Ticket, a $2 game.

Lottery officials said co-branded tickets with the Celtics have generated sales of more than $146 million since 2006, and sales of the new ticket are expected to reach $30.2 million.

The raffle game's jackpot will grow with every ticket sold and one winner will receive half of the game's total sales. SHNS

Robotics company takes a walk into Massachusetts

Device helps those with lower limb disabilities walk again Company head says new US center in Mass. will join 'life-sciences supercluster'

Vietnam veteran Theresa Hannigan became a paraplegic after contracting an autoimmune disease while serving in the military and was told by doctors she would never walk again.

She told that to a crowd of about 100 people yesterday before she pressed a control button on her wrist and started walking around the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center.

Hannigan demonstrated a new technology that is still waiting approval in the U.S. and could, advocates said, help countless people with lower-limb disabilities. ReWalk by ARGO Medical Technologies is an exoskeleton suit that enables persons with lower limb disabilities to stand, walk and climb stairs. The device was approved last month in Europe.

"For all you doctors out there who told me I'd never walk again, guess what? I am walking," said Hannigan, who lives on Long Island.

Yesterday's demonstration was made during the AdvaMed medical technology conference. It was coupled with ARGO's announcement that it was moving its U.S. headquarters to Massachusetts.

NICOLAUS CZARNECKI/METRO

▶ Paraplegic Army veteran Theresa Hannigan walks through the South Boston convention center with the help of ReWalk.

Quoted

"This means so much for those of us who are not able to walk ... to see people at eye-level."
THERESA HANNIGAN

Hannigan was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease that left her without the use of her legs and in a wheelchair.

Now, with the use of the ReWalk exoskeleton, she plans to walk a 1-mile road race later this month to help raise money for organizations that help military men and women.

The independence the device provides her is a major benefit, as is seeing her family.

"I was limited in how long I could stay," she said. "Now, going to see my mom? No problem."

$87.5K Cost of a ReWalk training device, per ARGO officials

3 ARGO officials said there are three people with the device at home for personal use in Europe, where it has already been approved.

40 The company's new U.S. HQ will have 40 employees.

Advocates see potential

Mike Ferriter, of the Greater Boston Chapter of the National Spinal Cord Injury Association, said he believes that the device's ability to provide independence is "huge." He also said the device will help Hannigan medically. "Along with independence, it's going to ... hopefully make her even healthier," he said.

How it works

The ReWalk exoskeleton has multiple components that attach to the legs and are included in a backpack strapped to the user's back.

- The user touches a control on the wrist to stand up, take steps or climb stairs.
- To take steps, the user leans forward and the device moves the legs. To stop, the user drags his or her feet and the device picks up on the motion.
- Hannigan said finding her balance is the most difficult aspect of using the device, but it is something at which she has improved.
- Nearly one dozen ReWalk training devices are currently in use across the country.

MICHAEL NAUGHTON
michael.naughton@metro.us

Salon Week: High-end beauty on a college student's budget

Boston-area beauty lovers will have a chance to spend half as much on salon services at 14 Hub locations.

Boston Salon Week, which runs until Sunday, comes on the heels of its inaugural event in April 2011, which organizers modeled after Restaurant Week. Organizers say the seven-day sale is meant to show appreciation for their existing clients, bring back inactive customers and gain new ones.

"We want to bring in new clients who have wanted to try high-end salons, but have been afraid to make the commitment," said Salon Week CEO Marc Harris. "We want young people who are going to college to come in and hopefully become our clients of the future."

Peter Bradley, owner of the Back Bay salon Bradley & Diegel, said he's glad he's participating: "It has boosted clients tenfold."

NICOLAUS CZARNECKI/METRO

▶ Co-owner Eva Mustafai cuts client Brittney Herrera's hair at Salon Eva Michelle on Newbury Street yesterday.

Reluctance

- Not all the participating salons will break the beauty bank. "I absolutely think people —all day long — will seek out value. Just because you're getting something at a very high price doesn't mean that it doesn't exist at a lower price — it does," Harris said.

Sign him up!

- "I liked the concept of being able to focus attention on fashionable salons on Newbury Street and reaching consumers who otherwise wouldn't come into the city."
  PETER BRADLEY, OWNER OF THE BACK BAY SALON BRADLEY & DIEGEL

14
Boston has 14 salons participating this week.

4
NYC is joining in for the first time; so far, four salons are on board.

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MORGAN ROUSSEAU
morgan.rousseau@metro.us

'Undressed' to impress

As part of Boston Fashion Week's Fashion Trail, a local Bohemian-style bar is inviting guests to take a break from watching clothes on the runway, and instead take a peek at what's underneath.

Three New York-based burlesque performers known as Medianoche, Calamity Chang and Bettina May will take the stage at The Beehive on Tremont Street tonight to perform "Undressed: Fashion Burlesque," a show that promoters describe as "delectable visions of undraped loveliness."

Each female performer will pay tribute to iconic fashion periods and fads, like the classic American pinup era of the 1940s and 1950s, as well as Spanish flamenco.

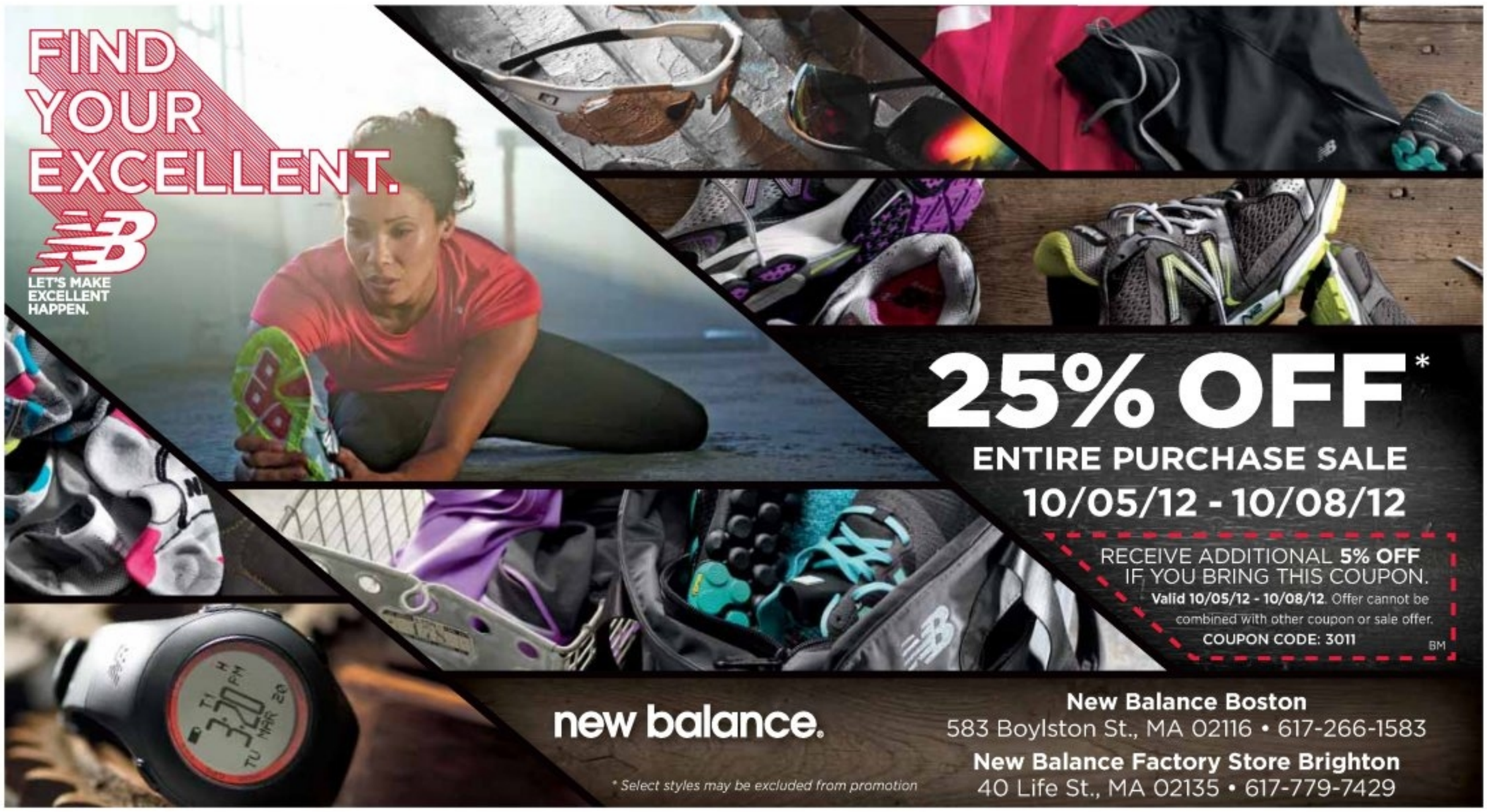
Chang, a New York-based performer who is also known as "The Asian Sexsation," will pay tribute to 1920s vintage Shanghai fashion.

The ladies take the stage at 8 p.m., and the show runs until midnight. There is a cash bar and no cover. **METRO/MR**

ALAN SMITH

▶ Bettina May is among tonight's performers.

"I love the Boston clientele. You can tell they are educated and liberal arts fans. It's not like working with a variety of awful people that I've had to perform for." CHANG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Metro photo challenge

▶ "Air Show Philadelphia" is by Jonathan Tuazon of Old Bridge, N.J.

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Rejection for voter ID again, this time in PA

A Pennsylvania judge barred the state from enforcing a Republican-backed requirement for voter photo-identification in the coming election, saying it's logistically impossible to make IDs available to everyone who needs one.

Commonwealth Court Judge Robert Simpson today said that while election officials can request an ID on Election Day, voters without one can cast ballots and have them counted. The enjoined law would have allowed voters without required ID to cast provisional ballots to be counted only if they returned with photo documentation within six days.

"I expected more photo IDs to have been issued by this time." JUDGE ROBERT SIMPSON

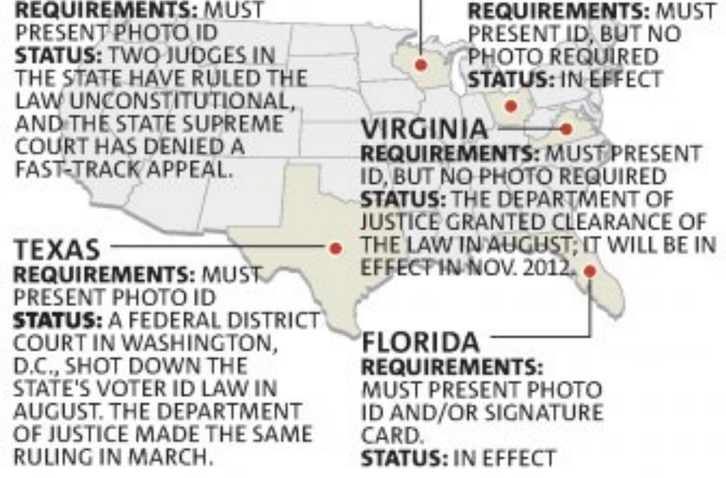
"I expected more photo IDs to have been issued by this time," Simpson, whose original approval of the law was rejected by the state Supreme Court, said in the 16-page ruling. "For this reason, I accept petitioners' argument that in the remaining five weeks before the general election, the gap between the photo IDs issued and the estimated need will not be closed."

Pennsylvania is the third state, following Texas and Wisconsin, where courts have rejected voter-ID laws passed by Republican-dominated legislatures since Obama's 2008 victory. Supporters of the law say they are necessary to prevent voter fraud. Opponents contend they are aimed at suppressing the votes of lower-income people and the elderly who might be more inclined to vote for Democrats. REUTERS

Voter laws

Thirty states in the United States have implemented laws that require identification for voting and three others, including Pennsylvania, have passed laws that are not being enforced.

Here's a sampling of voter ID laws in some of the key states and their status.


WISCONSIN
REQUIREMENTS: MUST PRESENT PHOTO ID
STATUS: TWO JUDGES IN THE STATE HAVE RULED THE LAW UNCONSTITUTIONAL, AND THE STATE SUPREME COURT HAS DENIED A FAST-TRACK APPEAL.
OHIO
REQUIREMENTS: MUST PRESENT ID, BUT NO PHOTO REQUIRED
STATUS: IN EFFECT
VIRGINIA
REQUIREMENTS: MUST PRESENT ID, BUT NO PHOTO REQUIRED
STATUS: THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE GRANTED CLEARANCE OF THE LAW IN AUGUST; IT WILL BE IN EFFECT IN NOV. 2012.
TEXAS
REQUIREMENTS: MUST PRESENT PHOTO ID
STATUS: A FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT IN WASHINGTON, D.C., SHOT DOWN THE STATE'S VOTER ID LAW IN AUGUST. THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE MADE THE SAME RULING IN MARCH.
FLORIDA
REQUIREMENTS: MUST PRESENT PHOTO ID AND/OR SIGNATURE CARD.
STATUS: IN EFFECT

In the news

Sandusky witness sues Penn State

PENNSYLVANIA. A key witness in the Jerry Sandusky child sex abuse scandal filed a whistleblower suit against Pennsylvania State University on Tuesday.
Mike McQueary, a former Penn State assistant football coach who said he saw one of the attacks, filed the civil suit in Centre County Court, according to the court's website.
Sandusky, a former Penn State assistant football coach, was convicted in June on 45 counts of child molestation. Sentencing is set for next week.
McQueary lost his job after charges were filed against Sandusky last year. REUTERS

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Opinion

SUSAN FERRECHIO
CHIEF CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENT FOR THE WASHINGTON EXAMINER

DEFINING A PATH TO THE FUTURE

Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney told a campaign rally crowd of thousands in this swing state Monday that he is looking forward to the upcoming debates with President Obama, calling them, "an opportunity to describe the pathway forward each of us would chose" for America.

Romney arrived in Denver late Monday, appearing at an aircraft museum to pick up an endorsement by Denver Broncos legend John Elway and to deliver a 20 minute campaign speech before heading into two days of intensive preparation for his first debate with Obama Wednesday.

"It will be like a conversation with the American people and we will get to describe our views," Romney told the crowd. Obama stopped campaigning on Sunday night and is secluded at a lakeside resort in Nevada, another swing state, cramming for his own debate performance. Romney told the crowd he is aware of the high expectations for the first of three presidential debates.

"Everybody wants to know who is going to win, who is going to score the punches," Romney said. "It's not so much winning and losing or even the people themselves, myself or the president. It's something bigger than that."

Romney backers, however, said their candidate could afford to throw a few punches to combat his image as a somewhat detached and impersonal candidate. "I hope he digs deep within himself to show his passion," Sally Johnson, a Denver retiree, told The Washington Examiner. "He holds his emotions in. He needs to show them."

Romney aides said Monday that the Republican nominee would focus in the next few weeks on winning over the so-called "soft" voters, those who may have picked a candidate but are not fully committed and can be convinced to change their minds.

Those are the very voters pollsters say can be won over with a breakout debate performance, but the

Quoted

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JEWEL SAMAD/AFP/GETTYIMAGES

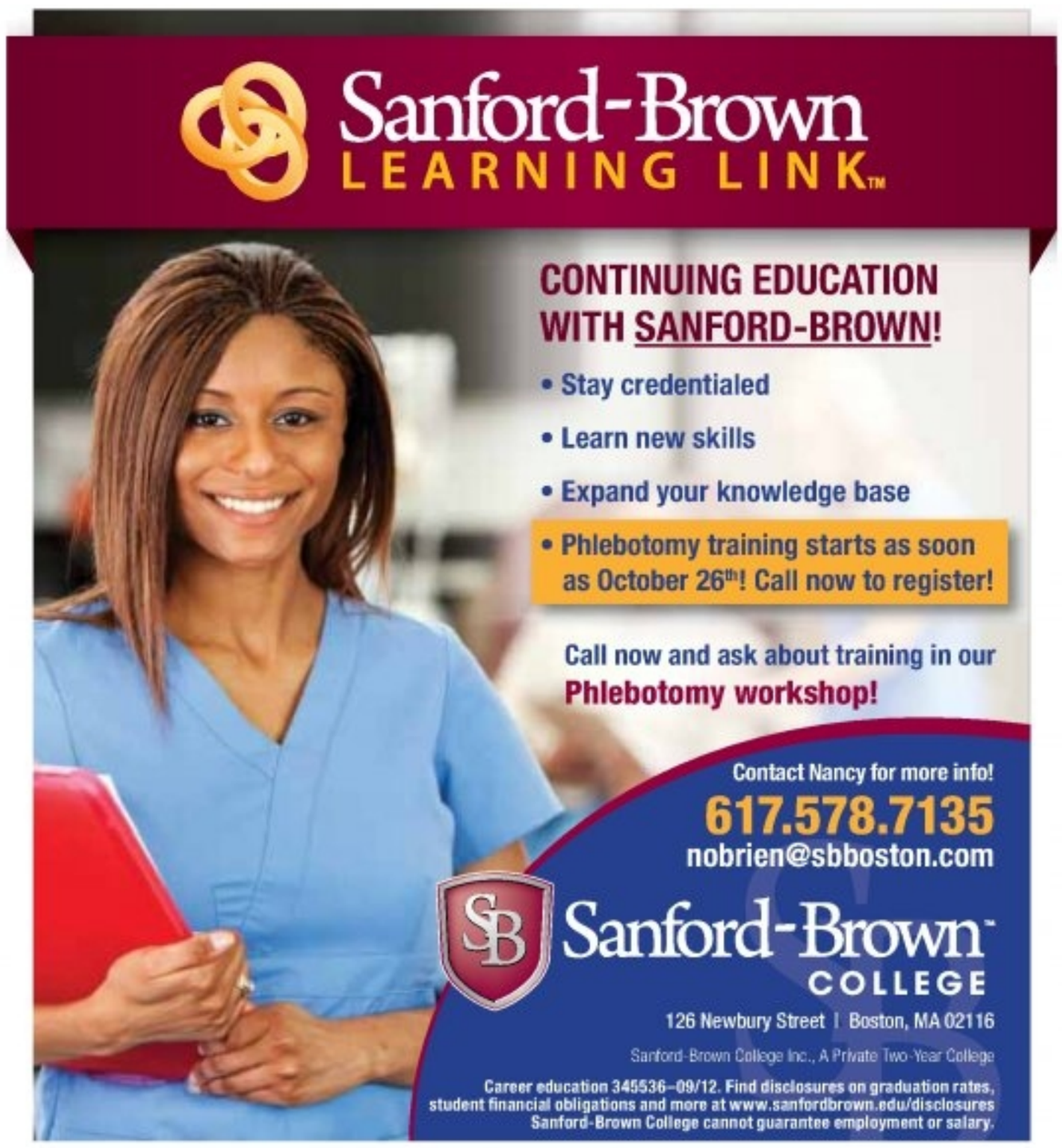
▶ Voters want to see a more personal side of the Republican presidential candidate.

Romney aides said they are looking beyond just the debates to attract this part of the electorate, who, even though they represent only a few percentage points in the polls, could be decisive in a close race.

Romney incorporated the new strategy in his last pre-debate appearance Monday, telling the Denver crowd, "go out there and find one person who voted for Barack Obama, or maybe three or four or five, and convince them to join our team."

There is good reason for the Romney camp to be seeking ambiguous voters as polls show the race tightening, with the two candidates statistically tied. While Romney is hunkered down in Denver, his campaign team will keep rolling. His wife, Ann Romney, will hold a rally on Tuesday near Denver, while vice presidential nominee Paul Ryan continues on a bus tour across Iowa, another swing state.

Metro does not endorse the opinions of the author, or any opinions expressed on its pages. Opposing viewpoints are welcome. Send 100-word submissions to letters@metro.us.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Pride & prejudice

What they're itching to brag about

Romney should discuss:

1 His business expertise: This is a tried-and-true strategy, as evidenced by people like New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg: If he's rich, he can make us rich, too. Just no talk of outsourcing.

2 Family values. Romney will jump at the chance to make the case to conservative voters that his values are theirs — no abortion, no messing with prayer in schools, and no question that Obama is ready to dismantle those concerns at any time.

3 His hardy bootstraps. "I used to be poor, too!" As his wife Ann can tell you, the Romneys once struggled. A very long time ago.

Obama should discuss:

1 Health care. Don't forget that Obama sort of got ya'll health care. Sure, he let Congress pick through it like vultures, but by 2042 or something, you'll be able to go to a doctor.

2 Getting troops out of Iraq. Obama originally promised to get all troops out of Iraq by 2009, but the end of 2011 is basically the same thing, right?

3 Killing bin Laden. In case you haven't heard, Obama killed Osama. Singlehandedly, with his bare hands. Eat it up, bloodthirsty America.

DANIELLE TCHOLAKIAN

Forget winning with facts; time to connect to voters

Arguing policy is all fine and good, but real winners of presidential debates have used platform to become human ◐ Wit and one-liners are most important now

All eyes will be on presidential incumbent Barack Obama and Republican challenger Mitt Romney during the televised debate this evening — and viewers won't just be paying attention to what comes out of the candidates' mouths. Nonverbal communication will play just as important a role in solidifying how viewers perceive each candidate, according to experts.

"The fact of the matter is, a body will not lie," said Sara Canuso, body language specialist and president of "A Suitable Solution," a Philadelphia-based personal image firm. "We all project through our body language our inner thoughts and our inner actions, so you will find that it is very important. People will subconsciously look at that because we are all hardwired to form our first impression by viewing peoples' image and body language."

Canuso said those first impressions were shaped months ago on the campaign trail. "Before they speak a word, both of them already have very strong, powerful images," she said. "Take, for example, when you view Obama and Romney, they're always dressed beautifully. They're tall and they carry themselves with grace and with character. They both have a very strong presence, so they already have made their first impressions."

But first impressions can be a damning obstacle to overcome — both candidates have been roundly criticized as being aloof and dispassionate, with Obama portrayed as an imperious intellectual and Romney as a distant one percent-er. "What they'll be doing is more eye connecting," Canuso predicted.

ALEX WIGGLESWORTH
awigglesworth@metro.us

A few tips for the candidates

OBAMA

She recommends that Obama focus on using a more commanding tone of voice and creating more variations in his pitch to convey both leadership and empathy. She said he should also crack more smiles than usual.

ROMNEY

She said that Romney, who faces additional pressure to "appear presidential" next to the incumbent, should connect with viewers by showing a wider variety of facial expressions and attempt to gain trust by keeping his eyes directly forward.

Experts

What will it take for Mitt to get his mojo back?

After weeks of criticized comments and moves by Mitt Romney and his campaign, the Republican presidential nominee has some ground to make up on President Barack Obama.

But after the now infamous "47 percent" comment, Romney's release of his 2011 tax forms and a statement viewed by some as a misstep shortly after the attacks in Libya, is there anything that can get Romney back on track with time running out before Nov. 6?

Political science experts said there is something that could help Romney, but would hurt many others: the economy.

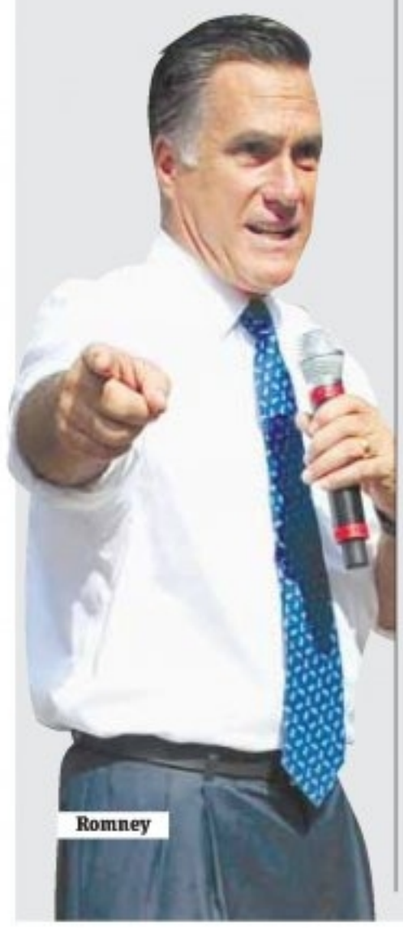
"If Romney could gain a point and a half [in the polls] on his own, and some real bad news about the economy comes out in the next month and a half, it could tip the election to him," said Richard Semiatin, a U.S. politics professor at American University.

But not all bad news would be good for Romney.

If protests and conflicts in the Middle East worsened, Semiatin said, those events would be favorable to Obama who would benefit from a "rally-around-the-leader" mentality. He cited the release of an Osama bin Laden videotape just days before the 2004 election that is believed to have helped President George W. Bush win reelection.

Other political experts said Romney could get some help to reverse the tide of mistakes if Obama commits a big enough gaffe during the debate.

MICHAEL NAUGHTON



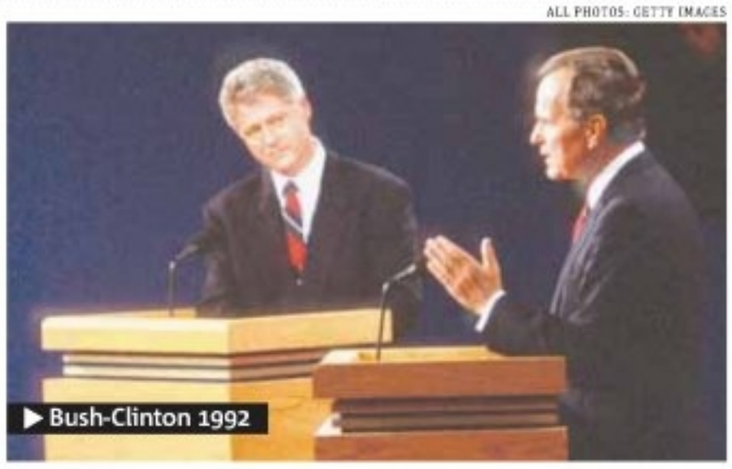
Romney

"If one of them makes a big mistake, then that takes over press coverage and that will pretty much kind of swamp everything else."
PROF. THOMAS PATTERSON

Some previous game-changers

Live debates can sink a candidate, or at least provide a few soundbites to be seized on for the rest of the campaign. Here are a few debate moments that proved to be historic:

ALL PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES



Bush-Clinton 1992

Kennedy-Nixon, 1960
The very first televised debates showed exactly how TV can help or hurt a presidential hopeful. Sen. John F. Kennedy showed up tanned and well rested. Vice President Richard Nixon was overweight from a recent injury and looked sickly.

Reagan-Carter, 1980
Whether Americans are better off than when Obama took office may have become a catchphrase at the Republican National Convention, but Reagan also used this question in 1980, asking, "Are you better off now than you were four years ago?"

Bush-Clinton, 1992
Even a casual glance at a watch can imperil a campaign. President George H. W. Bush learned this the hard way in 1992, when he checked his watch during a presidential debate with Bill Clinton and Ross Perot.

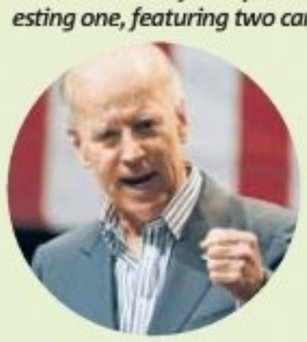
Gore-Bush, 2000
Al Gore sighed multiple times during a presidential debate against George W. Bush.

Gore-Bush, 2000
Gore gets a double mention for his bad luck with debates. He kept bizarrely talking about a "lock box" in a 2000 debate. For the record, the initial "lock box" reference was to protect Medicare from being locked in a box.

ALISON BOWEN

VP Debates: Rowdy vs. Wonky

The one and only vice-presidential debate promises to be an interesting one, featuring two candidates with contrasting styles:



VS.

Joe Biden is known for his down-to-earth tone and candor, which sometimes borders on provocative, while **Paul Ryan**, the budget wonk, is seen as more measured in his approach.

The discussion of foreign policy should play to Biden's strength and allow him to play up the elimination of America's No. 1 threat, bin Laden. Ryan will undoubtedly look to attack the Obama Administration for its handling of the wars.

SOLOMON LEACH

myentertainment

THE WORD

Metro's **Dorothy Robinson** shares her take on the world of gossip @dorothyatmetro dorothy.robinson@metro.us

Kardashian and Lopez to be co-hosts of 'X Factor'

Ryan Seacrest is getting a little competition as host of a reality TV singing show: It was kind of announced yesterday (through TMZ; no official word has been made as of press time) that **Khloe Kardashian** and **Mario Lopez** will be the new co-hosts of "The X Factor."

Earlier reports named Kardashian as the sole host, but because of her contract with E!, there was a lot of back-and-forth; Lopez was kept on the sidelines as a backup option. Now it looks like the professional fame-seekers will share the duties.

Good on Khloe for distancing herself from the Kardashian cabal. (Heads up: Don't be surprised if you see Kardashian Kabal being used as the name of their new comforter line for Sears.) But Mario Lopez? How does this guy continue to have a showbiz career when **Lisa Turtle** does not?

▶ How will Kardashian juggle all of her reality TV duties?

▶ Will Lopez host with or without his shirt on?

Is Curry coming back to 'Today'?

Meanwhile, over at the "Today" show, producers are offering a huge mea culpa to fired co-anchor **Ann Curry** and thinking the unthinkable: They are going to have her back on the show on a more routine basis in order to keep the morning show's ratings from sliding any further.

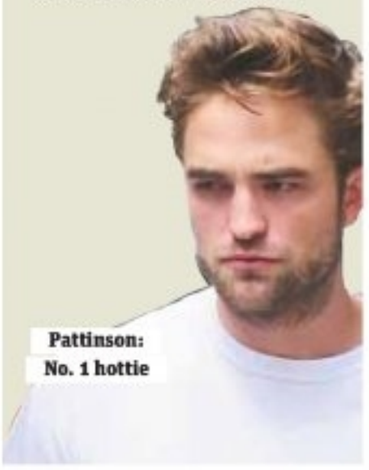
"Ann Curry reported for the 'Today' show on Monday morning from the Syrian border, and she will be featured on a much more routine basis going forward for the 'Today' show," a show insider tells Radar online. "Ann is truly doing what she loves the most now, reporting from war-torn countries and bringing viewers stories of people that are affected by the destruction in the region."

Curry coming back should help the ratings. Or, you know, just getting **Justin Bieber** to do the weather.

Pattinson is still No. 1 in hotness

Maybe this will help take his mind off the whole **Kristen Stewart** cheating scandal thing: "Twilight" star **Robert Pattinson** has been named the Sexiest Man Alive by Glamour U.K. for the fourth year in a row. The Brit-heavy list awarded "Avengers" star **Tom Hiddleston** the No. 2 spot, while **Johnny Depp**, **Michael Fassbender** and "Sherlock" star **Benedict Cumberbatch** rounded out the top five.

Well, that's depressing: If the hottest man in the world can get cheated on, what hope do the rest of us have?



Pattinson: No. 1 hottie

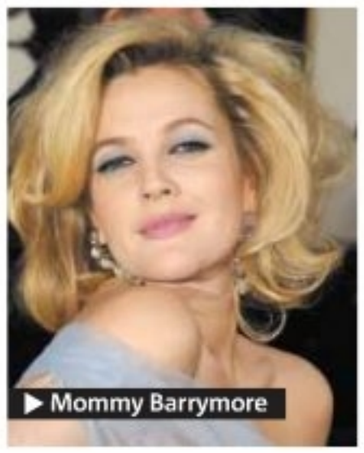
Talking points

No 'case closed' for Lohan, LaBella

Just because charges have been dropped against **Christian LaBella**, the 25-year-old man who allegedly assaulted **Lindsay Lohan** during a party in a New York hotel room this weekend, that doesn't mean the case is closed, according to CNN. "Cross-complaints for harassment were filed, and LaBella's assault arrest was voided after detectives investigated further," a police spokesman says, explaining that both Lohan and LaBella have filed harassment claims against each other. Lohan claims LaBella punched and choked her during an argument over cell phone photos LaBella had taken of the actress.

Barrymore welcomes baby Olive

Drew Barrymore is a new mom, giving birth to baby girl Olive last week, according to a statement by her reps. "We are proud to announce the birth of our daughter, **Olive Barrymore Kopelman**, born Sept. 26, healthy, happy and welcomed by the whole family," the statement reads.



▶ Mommy Barrymore

"Thank you for respecting our privacy during this most special time in our lives." This is the first child for Barrymore and husband **Will Kopelman**, who tied the knot in June.

Scientology bending the rules for Cruise

Some members of the Church of Scientology of bristling at the special treatment they believe **Tom Cruise** is receiving in the wake of his split from **Katie Holmes**, according to Radar Online. "They have bent the rules for Tom. If Tom was any other Scientologist — including lesser celebrities — he would not be allowed to continue seeing and maintaining communication with Katie or **Suri**," former Celebrity Center president **Nancy Many** tells the website. "When every other person that I have known of leaves Scientology, which Katie did without speaking of it directly, they are instantly shunned."

Shakira is having a baby boy

Shakira, who announced two weeks ago that she's having a baby, has gone a step further and revealed she's going to have a son. "Yes, it's going to be a boy," the singer announced during an interview with German TV station RTL. "When the baby is born, I want him to know he's helping change the world," the philanthropic pop star added. This will be the first child for Shakira and Spanish soccer star **Gerard Pique**.

2

The feed ...

▶ **Checking in with some of Hollywood's biggest names to see what they've been up to — in their own words, in 140 characters or fewer.**

Today, Bette Midler is busy in the garden, Ellen Barkin is trying to be polite, Sandra Bernhard is feeling much better and Sarah Silverman is getting religious.

@BetteMidler
Oops, MIA again, upstate harvesting KALE KALE KALE!!! It's like a WEED!! How many chips can you eat?? And let's not discuss the peppers!

@EllenBarkin
Nice to see responses from Christians whose political beliefs might be different from my own. Glad your out there.

@SandraBernhard
a little reflection does a girl good. back on the chain gang.

@SarahKSilverman
I found Jesus. He was hiding under the bed.

Ellen Barkin

A little Gaga, J.Lo and Christopher Walken for your Wednesday

1 **Jennifer Lopez** and her daughter **Emme Maribel Muniz** attended the Chanel Spring/Summer 2013 show as part of Paris Fashion Week at Grand Palais on Tuesday in Paris.

2 Singer **Keke Palmer** performed on BET's "106 & Park" at BET Studios on Monday in New York City.

3 **Christopher Walken** and **Sam Rockwell** arrived at the Los Angeles premiere of "Seven Psychopaths" at Mann Bruin Theatre on Monday in California.

4 Looking like "SNL" caricatures of themselves, **Donatella Versace** and **Lady Gaga** posed outside the Palazzo Versace on Monday in Milan.

5 **Andrew McCarthy** signed copies of his new memoir "The Longest Way Home" at Barnes & Noble in Los Angeles, Calif., on Monday.

6 "Pregnant in Heels" star **Rosie Pope** promoted her new book "Mommy IQ" at Bookends Bookstore on Monday in Ridgewood, N.J.

1. PASCAL LE SEGRETAIN/GETTY IMAGES
2. ANDREW H. WALKER/GETTY IMAGES
3. JEFF KRAVITZ/FILMMAGIC
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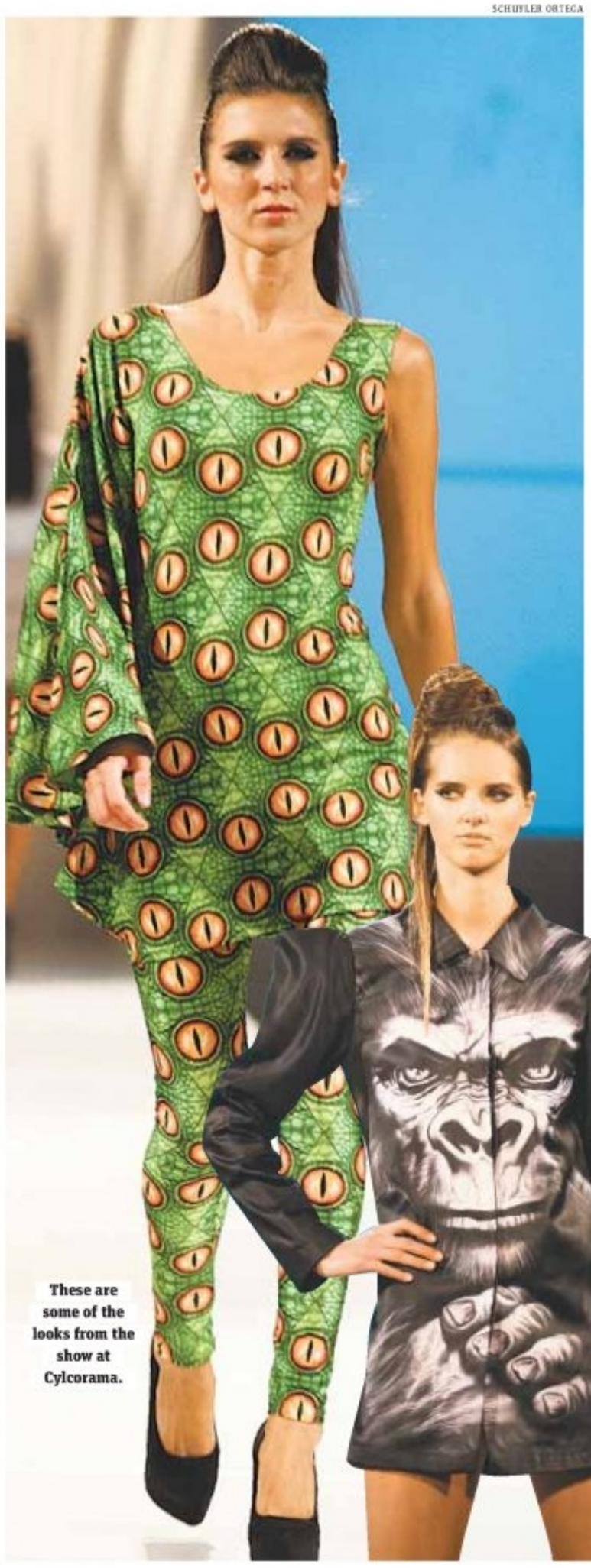

These are some of the looks from the show at Cylcorama.

- This is not New York or Paris
- 'Boston Fashion Week is different,' says founder about the Hub's style

Wherever it is on the globe, Fashion Week isn't Fashion Week without a bit of swank. Boston Fashion Week's Opening Night Gala, last Thursday, launched with Nordstrom showcasing in The Tent and continued with an after-party at the Mandarin Oriental, Boston. We said swank.

Unlike Fashion Week in, say, New York, London, Paris or Milan, Boston's version isn't media- and buyer-oriented and doesn't look several months ahead. Nordstrom, for instance, presented ready-to-wear now: fall through winter.

"Boston Fashion Week is different. The customers who shop for clothes are our main audience," says BFW founder Jay Calderin, who is the director of creative marketing at Boston's School of Fashion Design. "Media and buyers are here, but we're mostly connecting directly with the consumer."

Though Calderin started BFW in 1995 to galvanize and promote New England designers — in order to be bigger and more vital — its scope is now worldwide. The Emerging Trends show at Cyclorama on Saturday showed capsule collections from 11 diverse designers from the U.S., Poland, Ireland, the U.K. and Canada.

Fun was the watchword as designs ranged from New York-based Christine Manthey's elegant flowing silks, sultry black lace paneling, juxtaposed prints and harem pants to the urbane brutalism of Tamara G. at Poland's Trash, whose trademark gorilla glared from punky micro-minis and bone-skimming lycra outfits covered in an op-art third-eye pattern.

The Launch show, which ended the opening weekend's Tent events, is where Boston Fashion Week looks to the future and stays wholly local. It showcased five recent outstanding graduates from regional fashion design programs.

"What gets me excited is the new generation," says Calderin. "They are really experimenting; they're a year or two away from launching a collection. We get to see the new talent."

LINDA LABAN
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What is Boston fashion?

"New York is sporty, all-American; London is rebellious and experimental; Paris is couture and classic," Calderin says. "Boston is intellectual, academic, scientific. It's preppy, but with an edge."

No, this is not New York or Paris: This is a model in Boston Fashion Week's The Launch, looking demure in Jennifer Miller.

MELISSA OSTROW

If you go

BFW 2012 continues through Saturday. For more info, visit www.bostonfashionweek.com

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21st-century soul man

Miguel has never been a traditional artist, which is why his 'Kaleidoscope Dream' has such a colorful sound

R&B singer Miguel does not see himself as your everyday soul man. And with his iPod going from David Bowie to Prince to Queen to Kanye West to Diane Warren, he might be right. His latest album, "Kaleidoscope Dream," hit stores yesterday. And on this sophomore release, he definitely paints outside the lines, something which he says is within the traditions of R&B.

"I've never been a traditional artist because my influences span a broad range of music and sensibilities," he says. "The moment I started to incorporate my honest perspective into my music, all of these influences made their way into the sound and delivery of the art. R&B really influenced and inspired genres that are thriving today, including rock and hip-hop. It will always be soul at the core of it, because that's who I am."

Miguel's unconventional blend of soul, hip-hop, rock and electronica has been successful. His single "Adorn" is the latest in a string of hits the Los Angeles native has served up since his debut "All I Want Is You." A Grammy nod and three No. 1 hits on the R&B charts have him feeling good these days.

"It's a blessing to make music that I'm in love with, but it's an even bigger blessing to have people fall in love with it too," he says.

His new album feels like a jam session between Coldplay and Prince; a formula that conventional wisdom says the R&B crowd would reject. But conventional wisdom would be wrong. And the positive reception is welcomed as Miguel strives to give fans a timeless musical experience.

"I'm excited that people are open to the risks that I am taking," he says. "I want people to leave with something they will remember forever. I want them to say, 'I remember when I was 19 and I took this girl to this Miguel concert.' I do my best to give myself to the moment so everyone can lower their guard and let the music in."

G. VALENTINO BALL
letters@metro.us

Soundtrack to love

As an R&B singer, Miguel makes music that is the perfect backdrop for painting a romantic canvas. However, when it's his time to play Picasso, his own jams aren't at the top of the playlist.

Miguel laughs, "I'm not that narcissistic. There's some great music out there outside of the music that I make. I'm not that cool to listen to my music. It would just feel corny to me. Though it's definitely been requested."

Miguel isn't afraid to mix up the sounds on his new album.

Super 'Mikado'

The Lyric updates a Gilbert and Sullivan classic But the play is timely even without its references to cell phones, Bain Capital or the T

Timothy John Smith, foreground, plays the title role in "The Mikado" and nearly steals the show from the rest of the cast.

MARK S. HOWARD

Though it's been 127 years since Gilbert and Sullivan penned "The Mikado," the delightful spoof of social mores and political buffoonery feels like it could've been written yesterday.

The Lyric Stage has been splendidly transformed into the fictitious town of Titipu by set designer Janie Howland. Despite the serene backdrop, however, the town is run afoul by political hacks, ridiculous laws, inept schemers and greedy, ruthless pols of questionable breeding.

Though it's a familiar tale, director Spiro Veloudos updates the lyrics to include contemporary references to the MBTA, Supreme Court Justice Scalia, the Tea Party, Bain Capital and cell phones. Some work, some don't, but the effort wasn't necessary. This satiric operetta works as is.

The absurd, convoluted plot is driven by convicted criminals (flirting is the crime), fear of being beheaded, unrequited love, concealed identity and, of course, power and money. But at its core, "The Mikado" is ultimately the love story of Yum-Yum (Erica Spyres) and Nanki-Poo (Davron Monroe).

Once again, Spyres delivers the kind of nuanced performance that will leave you thinking the part was written for her. The soprano's glorious vocals and engaging presence make everyone fall in love with Yum-Yum, vanity notwithstanding.

Monroe also delivers an impressive turn as the wandering minstrel. Confident vocals and an authentic sense of vulnerability make it easy to hope he gets the girl.

Bob Jolly and Leigh Barrett also turn in funny performances. Timothy John Smith rounds out the impressive ensemble with a nearly scene-stealing turn as the Mikado.

NICK DUSSAULT
nick.dussault@metro.us

If you go

'The Mikado'
Through Oct. 13
Lyric Stage
140 Clarendon St., Boston
$25-$62
617-585-5678
www.lyricstage.com

The plot

When wandering minstrel Nanki-Poo learns that "cheap tailor" Ko-Ko has been sentenced to death for flirting, he makes his way to Titipu to claim Yum-Yum as his bride.

Unfortunately, crazy laws and an unattractive, unappealing stalker prove to be almost insurmountable challenges for him.

In the news

iPhone 5 will cost at least $1,800

So you're ready to buy the cheapest iPhone 5 there is: the 16 GB model with a two-year contract. A pretty good deal, right? Just $199 for the best smartphone on the planet?

Not so fast. Consider your voice and data plan, which is going to cost you at least $1,440 over two years — and that's for the rock-bottom plan on AT&T, the cheapest iPhone carrier in the U.S.. (AT&T is also the most expensive carrier; its unlimited plan will set you back more than $5,500 over two years.)

iPhone 5

These and other potential costs are broken down by content marketing firm Avalaunch Media (and partly based on a Forbes article). While the cost estimate is a bit prescriptive — who's to say you're going to need a case, a car charger, a stereo dock and an armband? — it's a good guess at how much you'll be spending.

If you're a former iPhone user, you're going to need Lightning adapters. And then there's the content; only 30 percent of iPhone users get by with free apps. Chances are that you are going to download more.

All in all, we'd say $1,800 is a conservative estimate.

CHRIS TAYLOR FOR Mashable
The Social Media Guide

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Vitamin vitals

We break down A-K ◗ Do you need to take a supplement? ◗ Plus: Which brands you voted best

We tend to get overwhelmed just by standing in the vitamin aisle, so we asked Joan Salge Blake, MS, RD, LDN, a spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, to break down the letters for us.

Vitamin A: "This is needed for vision, cell differentiation and a healthy immune system," Salge Blake says. "You can get vitamin A from beta-carotene, which is found in carrots, cantaloupe and a lot of plants. Beta-carotene gives you a two-for-the-price-of-one effect, because it's a disease-fighting antioxidant, too."

Vitamin B: "There are multiple Bs and they're involved in metabolism and energy production. They also protect the nerves and prevent anemia," Salge Blake adds. "Pregnant women and women of childbearing age need adequate folic acid [to support spine and brain development]. Older people produce less hydrochloric acid in their stomachs and can't process B12 properly. Vegans need a B12 supplement, because it's only found in meats."

A, B, C, D, E – what's the difference?

Vitamin C: "C is one of the most overused supplements," she says. "People think that because the body excretes excessive vitamin C in the urine that you can't overdo it. But too much of any vitamin can be problematic. With all vitamins, I say, 'Some is good, more is not necessarily better.'"

Vitamin D: "This is essential for bone health. We get it through sunshine, but baking in the sun causes skin cancer. ... People who spend a lot of time indoors or who don't drink milk might need a supplement."

Vitamin E: "We know it best as an antioxidant. It protects cell membranes. We get it from a lot of vegetable oils and nuts."

Vitamin K: "This is the blood-clotting vitamin," Salge Blake says. "It's found in green vegetables, and if you eat the recommended four and a half cups of fruit and vegetables a day it should fulfill your needs."

LINDA CLARKE
letters@metro.us

Top-rated

Top-rated supplement brands on consumer satisfaction:

- **Catalogue/Internet brand:** Swanson
- **Direct-selling (MLM) brand:** Nutrilite
- **Discount/warehouse brand:** Kirkland (Costco)
- **Grocery store brand:** Trader Darwin (Trader Joe's)
- **Health care practitioner brand:** Pure Encapsulations
- **Health food store brand:** Nutricology
- **Mass market multicategory brand:** Biotivia
- **Mass-market single-category brand:** Citracal
- **Pharmacy brand:** CVS
- **Vitamin store brand:** Vitamin World

Source: Consumerlab.com

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Taking a vitamin D supplement with your day's biggest meal may increase your body's ability to absorb it, says Consumerlab.com.

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Fall recipes: The apples of our eye

Joy's healthy bite

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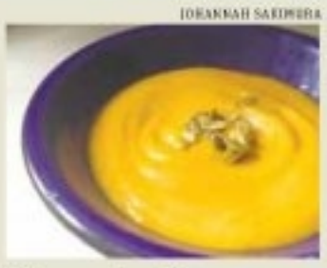
An apple a day — or two — may in fact keep the doctor away. Just in time for fall, a new study reveals that this everyday fruit has some pretty extraordinary heart health benefits. Researchers at Florida State University found that postmenopausal women who ate the dried equivalent of two fresh apples a day for six months slashed their LDL (or "bad" cholesterol levels) by almost a quarter and lost about three pounds on average. Here are a few delicious, healthy recipes to help you get your fill of this affordable superfruit.

Spiced-up applesauce

To maximize nutrition, I leave the fiber-rich peels on the fruit and avoid adding extra sugar.

Core four medium apples quarter them. In a saucepan over medium heat, combine the apples, half a cup of 100 percent apple juice and a tablespoon of lemon juice. Bring it to a boil. Turn the heat low and add a cinnamon stick, a teaspoon of freshly grated ginger and half a teaspoon of pumpkin pie spice. Simmer, covered, until the apples are soft, about 30 minutes. Remove the cinnamon stick and puree in a blender or food processor until smooth. It makes six half-cup servings.

JOHANNAH SARDIVARA



'Squashed' apple soup

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Cut a butternut squash in half lengthwise. Scoop out the seeds, mist the flesh with oil spray and sprinkle a quarter-teaspoon of kosher salt and pepper on each half. Place the squash flesh side-down in a baking dish and add half a cup of water. Bake until the flesh is fork-tender, about one hour. Once cooled, scoop out the flesh and set aside. In a large pot, sautee one diced onion in a tablespoon of olive oil until translucent, about 10 minutes. Add the squash, two chopped apples, 3½ cups of reduced-sodium chicken broth, a teaspoon of nutmeg and a bay leaf; bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer 30 minutes. Cool slightly, remove the bay leaf and puree in a blender until smooth. This makes four servings.

Baked apples with oatmeal filling

Satisfy your sweet tooth with this low-calorie dessert.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Rinse, core and hollow four large apples, leaving the bottom intact to hold the filling, and place the apples in a pie pan. In a medium bowl, combine one cup of rolled oats, half a cup of unsweetened applesauce, two teaspoons of honey, one teaspoon of vanilla extract and half a teaspoon of ground cinnamon and pumpkin pie spice, plus a teaspoon of lemon zest. If desired, add two tablespoons of raisins and/or chopped walnuts. Fill each apple with the oat mixture. Bake for 40 minutes, or until the sides of the apples are soft.

*— For more tips on healthy eating, follow **Joy Bauer** on Facebook and Twitter (@joybauer) and visit **www.joybauer.com.***

Metro does not endorse the opinions of the author, or any opinions expressed on its pages.

Letters

letters@metro.us

Frosch's follies fail to amuse

RE: "ONLY GOOD REPUBLICANS NEED APPLY" (METRO, OCT. 2)
Regarding news columnist Michael Frosch's column about a party's willingness to cheat to win: Can you say "ACORN"?
DREW BATES, VIA E-MAIL

RE: "ONLY GOOD REPUBLICANS NEED APPLY" (METRO, OCT. 2)
Sorry, but I disagree with news columnist Michael Frosch, who tries to put a political spin on the move to require that voters present identification.

You cannot get a driver's license, rent an apartment, get a bank account, enter a hospital or a government building without presenting a photo ID.

What is wrong with requiring presenting that same ID to vote?
JOHN OST, VIA E-MAIL

Frosch's columns are occasionally funny, but it's odd that you only have the opinions of one writer in your newspaper, and he is a leftist. Rather than having the obsequious Frosch berate the Republicans in each column, how about having a writer point out that Obama's leadership has lead to gridlock, massive deficits and the worst employment situation since the Depression of the 1930s?
RON FALCON, VIA E-MAIL

An election truly written in stone?

Now I can understand why the Mayan calendar stops soon after the 2012 presidential contest. I am still keeping my fingers crossed that "The Rent is Too Damn High!" Party guy will swoop in and win.
EUGENE TOWBA, VIA E-MAIL

Let's NOT put them in a room together

The Occupy Movement should take lessons from the Tea Party — incorporate into a subparty and become a rogue wing within the Democratic political base. They could also commandeer the Tea Party's alleged mission (preventing bank bailouts) because they are too concerned with obstructing our current president instead of enforcing their original mandates! With 12 trillion in American debt, EU economic crisis and a social attitude that avarice is a good thing, the Occupy Movement is ripe for politicizing. Providing balance and creating an antithetical group to the Tea Party also seems like a natural extension to current events.
RICH BRITTLE, VIA E-MAIL

Illegal guns: Let's make them illegal

Will gun control be an issue Nov. 6? Well, it should, but it should state and read "illegal gun control." Illegal guns commit more crime than legal guns. Let's add harder sentences to those who commit a crime with a gun and to those who sell a gun illegally.
ANDY BELLIZZI, VIA E-MAIL

Oops, our Romney bias is showing!

Good job sounding completely unbiased in your article on undecided votes, Metro. #sarcasm #are you serious. Next time you hodgepodge together a bunch of statistics and quotes, try to avoid your Romney-bias.
BONNIE MADEIROS, VIA E-MAIL

E-mail your letters: **letters@metro.us**

Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words.
Metro reserves the right to edit all letters.
Please include your name and contact information.

Horoscope

♎ Libra **Sept. 23-Oct. 23.** Do your very best not to disrupt anything that is presently running smoothly, because you could be all thumbs and make matters worse. Let your motto be: "If it isn't broke, don't fix it."

♏ Scorpio **Oct. 24-Nov. 22.** You're asking for all kinds of trouble if you deliberately play up to someone in order to make another person you don't like jealous.

♐ Sagittarius **Nov. 23-Dec. 21.** Only if you are tenacious and consistent will success be within your reach. However, the odds are against you if you try to gamble your way to greener pastures.

♑ Capricorn **Dec. 22-Jan. 19.** Friends and associates aren't likely to have any respect for your ideas or opinions if they sense that you have little regard for theirs. Be sure to keep an open mind.

♒ Aquarius **Jan. 20-Feb. 19.** Don't allow anybody who's notorious for being unable to manage his or her resources to handle your own. This error in judgment could turn out to be very expensive.

♓ Pisces **Feb. 20-March 20.** Things you envision can be brought into being, if you work at it. However, this does not mean you could succeed teaming up with another.

♈ Aries **March 21-April 19.** You won't mind going out of your way to assist a friend. However, it will really irk you if the recipient has a lack of acknowledgement and appreciation.

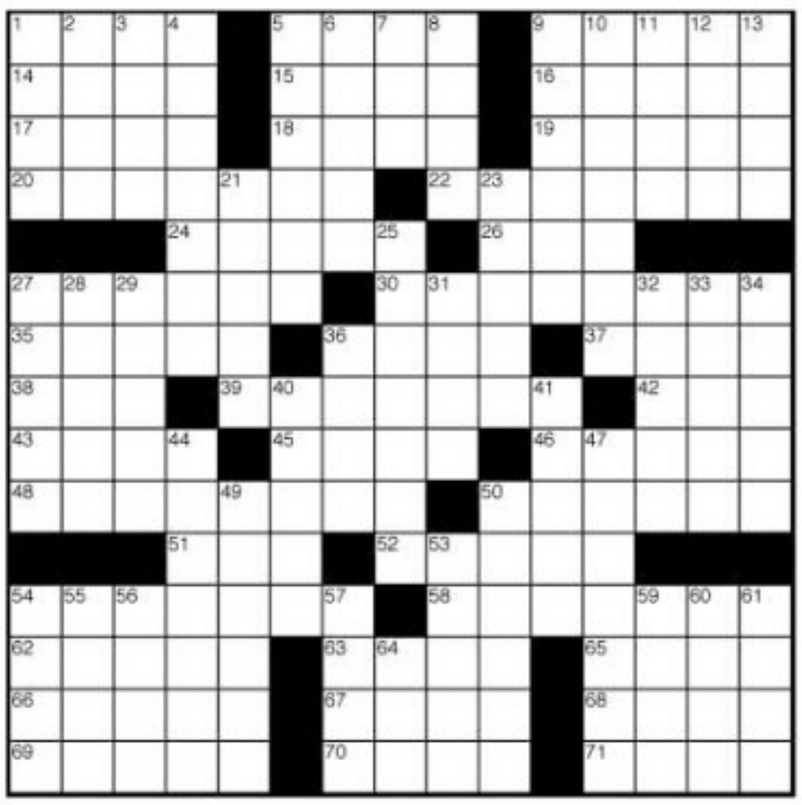
♉ Taurus **April 20-May 20.** If your old standbys aren't available to do something fun with you, it might be best to go it alone. Involvements with substitutes aren't likely to work out too well.

♊ Gemini **May 21-June 20.** Once you successfully have achieved something, let it go and move on to something new. If you keep trying to improve it, you could unravel your own accomplishment.

♋ Cancer **June 21-July 22.** Your keen imagination can be a very big plus, provided you remain positive and channel it constructively. Once you start to think negatively, it will be a different story.

♌ Leo **July 23-Aug. 22.** Avoid any speculative involvements, especially those that require you to dip into your savings in order to participate. Chances are what starts out wrong will end up wrong.

♍ Virgo **Aug. 23-Sept. 22.** This might not be one of your better days for decision-making, but what could make it even worse is that the persons to whom you go for counsel could be even more inept than you.
BERNICE BEDE OSOL



Across
1 Half, in combos
5 Outlet insert
9 Safari leader
14 Circle size
15 Parking lot sight
16 Burr or Copland
17 "Semper fi" grp.
18 Room service item
19 Drip-dry fabric
20 Cop's contact
22 Shellfish
24 Ms. Lauper
26 Santa — winds
27 Gum arabic tree
30 Painter's aid (2 wds.)
35 Sextant's successor
36 Barbecue favorite
37 Foot part
38 Ja, to Jacques
39 Paprika dish
42 Off-rd. vehicle
43 Fuel cartel
45 Mosque official
46 — nous
48 Laid an egg (2 wds.)
50 Rubicon crosser
51 Pamplona yell
52 Monkeys' taboos
54 Nightstand spot
58 Hook up
62 UFO passenger
63 Flower container
65 Neutral color
66 Jewelry box
67 Old Dead Sea kingdom
68 Tar's toddy
69 Pet nickname
70 Japan's first capital
71 Heredity factor

Down
1 Herr's abode
2 Prefix for "while"
3 Brief message
4 1980s Chrysler CEO
5 Copper "rust"
6 Put out bait
7 Tony-winner — Hagen
8 "Naked Maja" artist
9 Kind of split
10 Buttonholes
11 Younger Guthrie of folk music
12 When shadows are shortest
13 "Green Gables" redhead
21 Recumbent
23 Candy sheets
25 Leave alone
27 Reserved or reticent
28 Sporty car
29 Movie mermaid
31 Tot's wheels
32 Billy and nanny
33 "Violet" lead-in
34 When pigs fly
36 Adidas rival
40 Fixed a squeak
41 Emulates Galen
44 Most intimate
47 Savings (2 wds.)
49 Hard and stern
50 Theater
53 Cap brim
54 Support
55 Post-kindergarten
56 Eat sparingly
57 Equal
59 Large lot
60 — Hubbard of sci-fi
61 Racing sled
64 Oklahoma town

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2	1		6				5	
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		5		8	4			
	6	2						
8			2	1		5		

SUDOKU **LEVEL: EASY**

			5			6		9
			1	2		3		
3		5					2	
	9	1		7	8			6
			2		4			
4			9	5		7	3	
	4					8		2
		2		1	7			
1		8			2			

SUDOKU **LEVEL: HARD**

Solution to yesterday's crossword

How to play Sudoku: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

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Optimism that Farrell could be Sox man

The wish of most Red Sox fans is that former Boston pitching coach and current manager of the Toronto Blue Jays, John Farrell, somehow finds his way to Fenway Park in the coming month or so.

Farrell, the most likely candidate to replace Bobby Valentine if he is dismissed, is under contract with Toronto through 2013.

GETTY IMAGES

▶ John Farrell

There was optimism yesterday, however, that the Red Sox could eventually work out a deal with the Blue Jays to land the 50-year-old disciplinarian, with former Mets general manager Jim Duquette stating that there is a "disconnect" between Farrell and Toronto general manager Alex Anthopoulous.

Duquette, who discussed Farrell's future on WEEI's "Mut and Merloni" show, also talked about how Valentine is unlikely to keep quiet on his way out the door if he is, indeed, fired.

"There was some subtle comments that would come out in the press [after being fired in New York] and I'll think you'll see some of that stuff," Duquette said.

MATT BURKE

Red Sox: 3 easy steps to restore the faith

Popularity of franchise should come back as quickly as it went away ◐ Front office must be prudent with decisions ◐ Solid manager, good cleanup hitter on the Red Sox wish list

The Red Sox will conclude their worst season in more than 45 years tonight and then all the attention can be devoted to preparing for 2013. Many decisions will need to be made, including whether or not to re-sign their current free agents.

There has been mutual interest between Cody Ross and the organization, and one would expect David Ortiz to return as well. Other than those two, none of the free agents are expected to be re-signed.

Here are three steps to fix the Red Sox franchise:

1 FIND THE RIGHT GUY

For obvious reasons, Bobby Valentine hasn't been the right manager for the Red Sox this year and is not expected to return next season. The organization needs to find the right man for the job and not just settle for the biggest name/personality like they did last offseason. Some possibilities include: John Farrell (Toronto Blue Jays manager), Tim Bogar (Red Sox bench coach), Dave Martinez (Tampa Bay Rays bench coach) or Mike Maddux (Texas Rangers pitching coach).

2 CLEANUP THE MESS

After trading away Adrian Gonzalez, the Red Sox do not have a true cleanup hitter on their roster. Ortiz is no longer that guy, neither is Ross, or Middlebrooks. In recent days, Mauro Gomez has been the Red Sox' No. 4 hitter, a player who didn't even make the big league club following spring training.

With financial flexibility this offseason one of their biggest priorities needs to be signing a free agent power hitter to hit cleanup. It would preferably come in the form of a first baseman or an outfielder.

Their options may include: Josh Hamilton, Adam LaRoche, Nick Swisher and Michael Bourn. Pretty slim pickings, so the Red Sox may be forced into a trade for the cleanup hitter they desperately need.

3 END THE SO-CALLED STREAK

This has been one of the biggest complaints among Red Sox Nation this season as each game as been declared a sellout even though, at times, Fenway Park hasn't been even 80 percent full. The "distribution streak" is nearing 800 games and is the longest such streak in major U.S. sports.

There is no question next April there will be games that are not sold out. It would be in the organization's best interest to then declare the sellout streak over. It wouldn't be the end of the world; fans will still continue to show up, and it might even bring some old fans back.

RYAN HANNABLE
sports@metro.us

Free agents

Players eligible for free agency this offseason:

- **On the Sox** —David Ortiz, Daisuke Matsuzaka, Cody Ross, James Loney, Aaron Cook and Vicente Padilla.
- **On the market** — First base and outfield will be two spots the Red Sox target. Options include Josh Hamilton, Adam LaRoche, Nick Swisher and Michael Bourn.

GETTY IMAGES

▶ The Red Sox are set to play the one-year deal game with David Ortiz once again.

In the news

Remember me?
Peyton Manning, the Patriots' biggest individual rival over the past decade, returns to Foxboro this Sunday and Patriots players have been impressed with the early returns coming out of Denver.

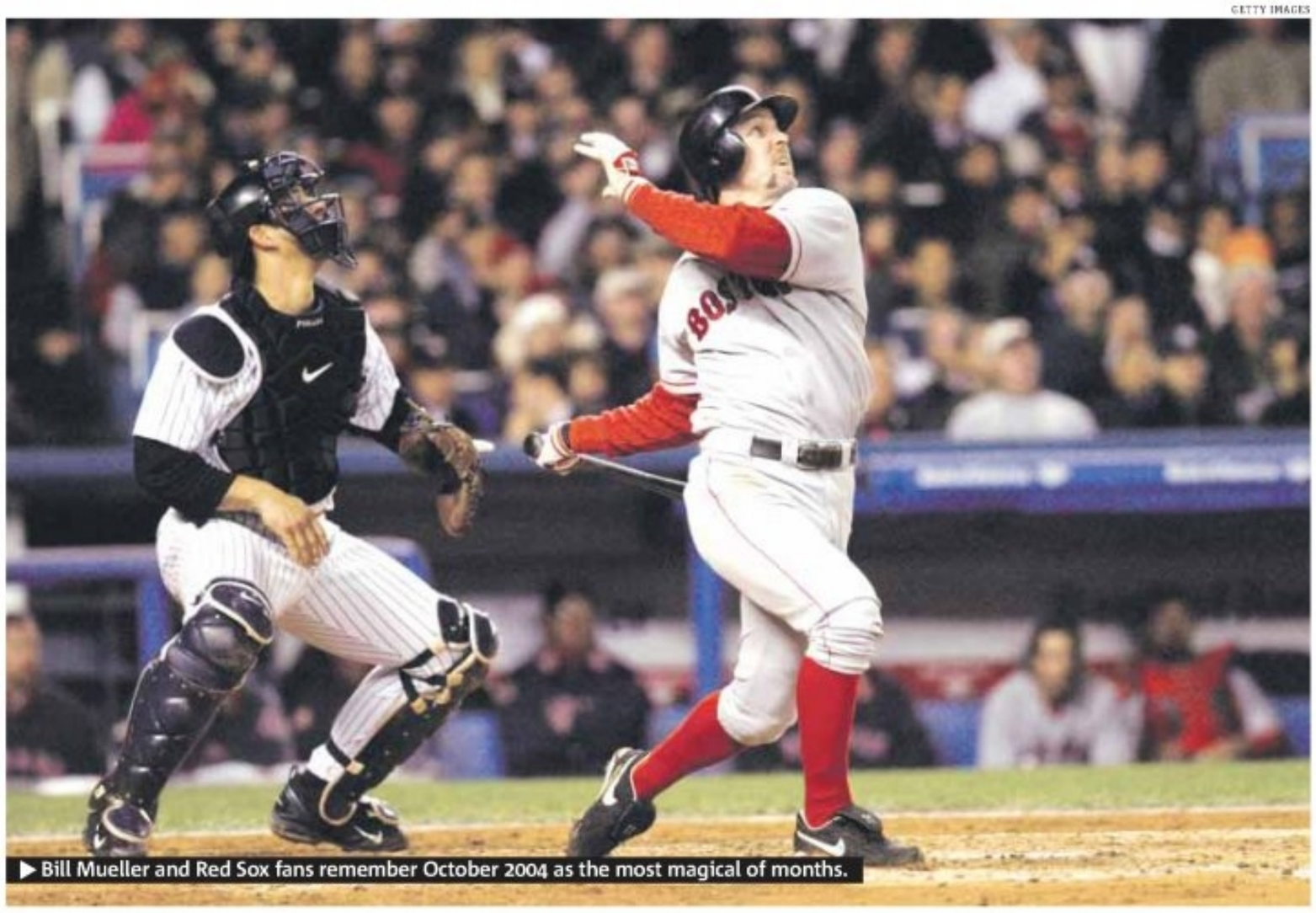
"If not the smartest, he's one of the smartest to ever play the position," Pats cornerback Kyle Arrington said of Manning to ESPN. "He does a great job of getting his team in the right play and right situation."

ON TV TODAY

MLB

RED SOX AT YANKEES
7 P.M., NESN

GETTY IMAGES



▶ Bill Mueller and Red Sox fans remember October 2004 as the most magical of months.

The most wonderful time of sports year

October the most magical month on the sports calendar ◗ Baseball playoffs begin this weekend ◗ Football in full swing ◗ NBA gears up

Opinion

I'm not afraid to declare that October is the best sports month of the year and that's not just because locally, the Red Sox nightmare of a season in 2012 mercifully ends tonight. There are numerous reasons that make this the best time, if you consider yourself a serious sports fan with many interests. Plus, unlike the winter, the weather is still decent outside so you don't feel trapped in your house or apartment and can still enjoy outdoor activities. Summer is not even considered — it's all baseball and not much else.

October is mostly associated with the MLB playoffs and for good reason. As tedious and needlessly long as the regular season is, MLB's postseasons always deliver the goods in terms of excitement, memorable games and performances. The fact that they added a second wild card in each league this season only increases our interest by adding another team to the mix. It would be nice if the Red Sox could reach the postseason again, after missing out the last three times, but the MLB playoffs are so good that there's plenty of reason to watch even without a rooting interest.

College football and the NFL are both starting to get into the meat of their schedules (conference and divisional play) and this period separates the contenders from the frauds. The pressure and stakes increase each weekend, which is what makes both versions of the sport excellent — October is when the games really start to mean something.

October is also when the NHL would normally start, but I'm not holding my breath on that hopeless league to get its act straight anytime soon in 2012. NBA training camps have started (the Celtics just left for a trip to Europe featuring exhibition games against European teams) and while I can't say that basketball before Christmas really thrills me, I won't be complaining when the C's open up their regular season on Oct. 30 in Miami against the Heat. Finally, college basketball's Midnight Madness and college hockey both begin next week. What more do you want? October has it all, so sit back and enjoy all the action.

RICH SLATE
sports@metro.us

MLB Playoffs

A look at the teams who have punched their ticket:

- **American League** The Yankees, Orioles, Tigers, Rangers and A's are locked in.
- **National League** The Nationals, Braves, Reds and Giants are in with one slot still up for grabs as of yesterday.

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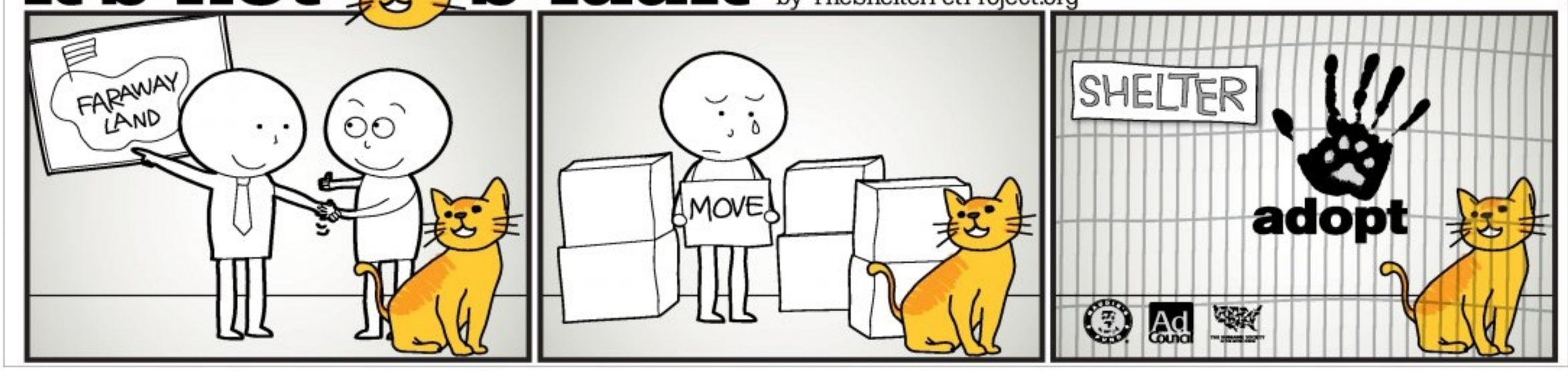

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Finally time to winterize

It's the season to take care of the nooks and crannies that let heat out and let cold in Small improvements will cost you now, but save you in the long run And there's that old furnace, both scary-looking and costly

Time to haul those air-conditioning window units back to the basement and prepare your space for the deep freeze. This year, think about how you can better winterize your home or apartment with just a few inexpensive alterations. The key to being able to stay warm, reduce heat bills and stay within your budget is simplicity.

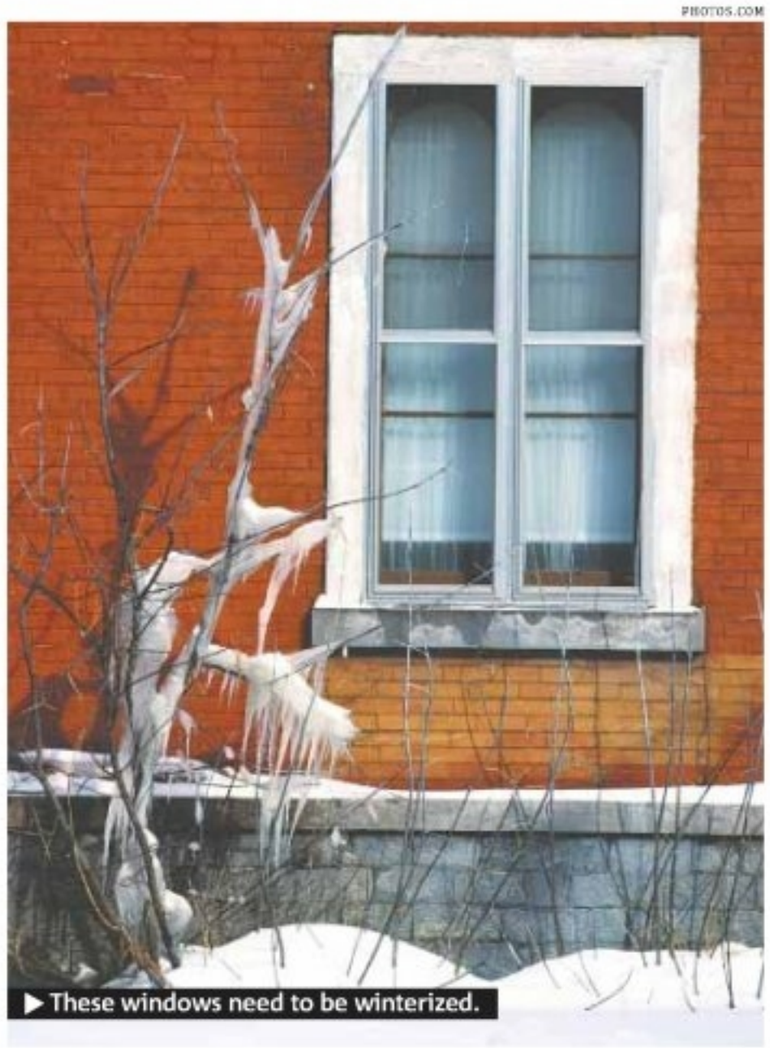
1 Change the setting on your ceiling fan
This is the quickest fix imaginable: Just flip your ceiling fan to reverse. There's typically a small button on the unit that does this. Adjust this so that the blades move in a clockwise rotation. That will push down and recirculate warm air.

2 Creatively cut drafts
A draft snake is a very basic tool that's like a warrior against the cold. This unassuming tube of insulation rests at the bottom of your doors and greatly reduces any draft sneaking into your home. Plus it's a quick project for anyone even slightly adept in crafting.

THINKSTOCK

3 Get that furnace up-to-date
Just like we need to go to the doctor for routine checkups, furnaces need to be serviced yearly. Helpful hint: Ask your maintenance person to clean the ducts in your furnace. This will ensure proper use and guarantee that you won't be working your furnace overtime.

4 Install storm windows
If you're willing to splurge a little on your projects, installing storm windows is one of the most efficient ways of keeping warm air in and cold air out. These energy savers do an incredible job of sealing all drafts around the window. Remember, you get what you pay for — so shop around for the best deals on quality brands. Ask your home improvement store if they offer home installation, too, as it can sometimes be a daunting task.


PHOTOS.COM
▶ These windows need to be winterized.

5 Prepare for an emergency
Here's hoping we're not in for a long, mean winter full of downed tree limbs and power shortages. But we have seen it in the past, so make sure to have an emergency kit in your home. It should include basic first-aid supplies, candles, matches, batteries, bottled water and canned goods.

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at home with metro

Boston Design Center has got The Look

For its open house this year, BDC focuses on homeowners 'We want consumers to get to know who we are'

This is the day that designers and design junkies have been waiting for: the Boston Design Center's annual open house. Only this year, it's a bit different. Scaled down to a day-long event dubbed The Look, you could call it a redesign, a simplifying and a cozying up, much like the way people have been thinking about homes lately.

Most of the year, the double doors of this impressive granite building off the South Boston Waterfront are opened by designers on the lookout for ideas and products from the many showrooms. BDC is geared to match designers with luxury manufacturers — but that excluded an important part of the process: the homeowner.

"We want consumers to get to know who we are," says Julie Rogowski, the BDC's general manager. "We're a big building with good stuff." That's 5,500 square feet of good stuff, in fact. "There are 43 showrooms — and walking into all that, well, it can be overwhelming."

The Look aims to welcome all with a day of seminars, sipping wine, nibbling Hotel de Chocolat goodies and being inspired.

"We are one-stop shopping for ideas and for all kinds of high-end products," says Rogowski. "We have a designer on call for guidance. Even people with a modest budget, and that's most of us, can come here and find an inspirational piece to build a room around."

LINDA LABAN
linda.laban@metro.us

BDC

▶ Wanna see what's inside? You can, today!

The 342 Club

The open house also introduces a new service for its designer clients. Located on the third floor of the BDC, the 342 Club is a private space with Wi-Fi dedicated to designers. There are two conference rooms for client meetings available on a first-come, first-serve basis and dining areas with catering capabilities. Yearly membership costs $500; day passes cost $35. The 342 Club is free and open to all through Nov. 30.

If you go

The Look
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How To Live Within Your Means
This two-hour seminar will help you evaluate your current financial status, and teach you how to adjust your finances.
October 29: 6:30PM-8:30PM
BCYF Holland Comm. Ctr., 85 Olney St, Dorchester

Homebuying 102: Purchasing A Condominium
This two-hour seminar for graduates of Homebuying 101 will teach you everything you need to know about condo buying.
October 16: 6:00PM-8:00PM
BCYF Condon Comm. Ctr., 200 D St, South Boston

How to Buy a Home That Needs Work
A two-hour seminar about special mortgages and other resources available to help you fix-up your home.
October 15 : 5:45pm - 7:45 pm
Uphams Comm. Health Ctr, 415 Columbia Rd., Dorchester
October 22 : 6:00pm - 8:00 pm
Winter Chambers, 26 Court St., Boston

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9:00-am - 12:00 noon
BCYF Holland Community Center
85 Olney Street - Dorchester

Financial Assistance Workshop	*9:00 - 10:00am, 10:30 - 11:30am*
Meet the Lenders	*10:00 - 12:00pm*
How to Hire a Contractor	*9:00 - 10:15am*
BHC Home Repair Info Seminar	*10:00 - 11:00am*
Options for Reducing Your Mortgage	*11:00 - 12 noon*
How to Buy a Foreclosed Property	*9:00 –10:30am*
How to Buy a Home that Needs Work	*10:30 - 12 noon*

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at home with metro

▶ Clean up those spices.

THINKSTOCK

Work at home for weekend warriors

▶ Here are some ideas for fixing up your abode during the weekends this fall ▶ Ideas are for thrifty and wealthy alike ▶ Spruce up for comfort, design

If you look around your house or apartment and start to list all the improvements you could make, you might just give up before you even start. Home improvement can be overwhelming when you approach it all at once. But take a weekend here and there to tinker on various projects and you'll be surprised how much you accomplish.

1 Install a dimmer switch
This takes very little money and just a basic understanding of wiring. Or check out YouTube to watch the experts do it. You'll want to install a dimmer — and set the mood — in every room of your house.

2 Rethink storage
Break out of the drab cupboard and expose your dishes, spices and canned soups. Open-shelving can be done in almost any room in the house. If you want to show off your extensive library, just look into the DIY shelving kits. You and your living room just got a lot smarter.

3 Design a gallery wall
Pick up a bunch of picture frames in various sizes. You can go to the thrift store or the department store — it's your budget. Fill the frames with photos, clippings, scrap wallpaper, whatever you want. Place frames on the floor to figure out how you want to cluster them together. Go big and take up a whole wall or create small groupings. It's attention-grabbing and can be done regardless of how much space you have.

ZOONAR

▶ Liven up your walls.

4 Give your kitchen some life
It's impressive what a few vibrant tiles can do to a kitchen. Play around with pattern ideas and color schemes, glue those suckers to the area behind your kitchen sink and under your cabinets, and you'll feel like you remodeled the whole kitchen.

5 Splurge if you can
This is for those that have the ability to drop some serious cash on their upgrades. Think about what room you like best. Are you an aspiring culinary whiz in the kitchen or a studious worker in the den? Do you primp for what seems like hours in the bathroom? Find your favorite spot and make it even better. Install that open range stove top or television that pops up from behind a bookshelf. Go nuts.

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HANG UP YOUR COAT!

Remember when your teacher or parent used to nag you to do that? Now, you won't need any nagging with these fun ways to put away your cold-weather stuff

That nip in the air means one thing: Jackets are piling up around your home. Act now before hats, boots and scarves, all vying to take a chunk out of your apartment's order, join them. These simple outerwear-storing solutions allow easy access (and even a touch of art, too) and avoid hall clutter and that frustrated cry: "Where's my scarf? I can't find my gloves!"

LINDA LABAN
linda.laban@metro.us

Economic, stylish, functional

1. The aptly named **Coat Tree** has nine "branches" at variable height to hang and easily access outerwear. It comes in espresso, made from solid hardwood, and bamboo, made from sustainable bamboo. Easy assembly means you'll just need a Phillips screwdriver. **$70**

2. For the minimalist, the **Nickel 5-Hook Flip Rack** takes care of that (one) black jacket and (one) black scarf. The hooks fold flat when not in use. **$40**

3. No more puddles: Nothing ruins a floor or carpet quicker than salty puddles from boots and shoes warming up and shedding snow. Put a **Boot Tray** by your doorway and order all who enter to tray their footwear. Available in black and translucent. **$8 (Container Store, 27 Boylston St., Chestnut Hill, 617-566-7400, www.containerstore.com)**

Industrial, rustic chic

Everything will be in its right place with the multiple storage options of the **Pipeline Hall Tree** ($499). This is a catchall storage unit for a hall; add it to a room to create a self-contained "mudroom." The design is inspired by industrial pipes and made of raw steel and mango wood. **$499, West Elm Fenway, 160 Brookline Ave., Boston, 617-450-9500, www.westelm.com**

Art for practicality's sake

Go eclectic with this novel way to hang scarves and coats — even pop a hat over the top spokes. Made in America by Pennsylvania-based Lostine, the **Bloak Ladder** is crafted with domestically harvested white oak, and the natural finish produces a feathering effect as the color merges. It comes in small and large. **$400-$425, Twelve Chairs, 319 A St., Boston, 617-701-3496, www.twelvechairsboston.com**

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RADON IN YOUR WATER

By Attorney George Warshaw

Last week I wrote about the dangers of radon in one's home even at the so-called federal safety level. With **7** out of a thousand nonsmokers and **62** out of a thousand smokers predicted to get lung cancer at the federal safety level, it hardly seems like a safe level at all.

Radon is not just limited to the air in one's home. It's in drinking water. While city or town water is treated and likely to disperse any radon within it, if you have well-water then you may have a serious problem.

Radon in one's water supply can cause stomach cancer when ingested if levels of radon are sufficiently high. Similarly, radon gas that is dispersed when one washes dishes or showers can cause lung cancer.

Safety levels in water are measured differently than in air. That's what confusing. Not all the states are consistent in what they view as a safe level or problem dose. Massachusetts believes that a level of 10,000 pCi/L is safe in water. New Hampshire believes that only 2,000 pCi/L is safe. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency thinks 300 pCi/L (yes, that's right, 300) is the safe level.

So if you have radon in your water supply, take action, and don't necessary rely on what the government thinks is safe.

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George Warshaw is a real estate attorney and author. He represents buyers and sellers of homes and condos in Massachusetts, and prepares wills, trusts, and estate plans. George welcomes new clients and questions at metro@warshawfaw.com.

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